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have found that the great sonorousness of the American instruments was owing either to this frame or this metallic *ensemble* all of one piece, used for the first time, as I have said, by M. Chickering; a process equally used by those who are in favor of crossed strings. As there is not such a frame in the French pianos, I am inclined to believe, that by making use of it, the French manufacturers will arrive at the same degree of sonorousness.

If more or less of sonorousness rest in the use of this metallic frame, why change the direction of the strings? why fall back upon a scientifically defective system, abandoned and condemned by the master manufacturers? Is this system indispensable in the construction of grand pianos? It is said that with crossed strings space is gained; but no space is wanted in a grand piano; the tale of the instrument fully yields all the room that is necessary to give the strings the required space between each other. In Europe as well as in America I conceive the utility of this mode of direction, only in square pianos; because in this construction space is wanting, and M. Chickering has thought of a circular plan, disposing the hammers in curved line—a valuable invention, which enables the maker to give more space to the scale in the distribution of the strings.

What will attach an eternal prejudice to the system of crossed strings, is the defect of homogeneity which physically exists in the different parts of the sonorousness of the instrument. Thus, a musical ear will easily notice the sound of the place where the strings cross each other; the sound changes in quality, and you feel that it is not free, that it is thwarted in its expansion, that, in short, there is a perturbation in the vibrations which produce it. A skillful artist knows sometimes how to hide these imperfections, but they do not exist the less. This is the reason for our giving the preference to straight strings.

The great success of the pianos of the house of Chickering at the Universal Exhibition, is owing to their excellent quality in general; but also to the continued efforts of that house, which, not satisfied merely to do well, is constantly endeavoring to improve and to give to their piano all the desirable qualities.

Messrs. Chickering have desired to give to the sounding boards of their pianos, the same freedom as that possessed by violins. They occupy under the metallic frame the whole extent of the case and are entirely separated from the extremities of the string pegs and pins. They are held up by the bolts, which commencing from the harmonic bars, pass through them and attach themselves again to the wooden cross-beams at the bottom of the instrument. In this way, the sounding-board is relieved from all weight, and all the vibrating parts are in the best condition;

because this sounding board preserves throughout its extent a perfect liberty of action.

There is a remarkable thing in the instruments of Messrs. Chickering, which is this. However great the shock, which the strings are made to bear, the sympathetic reverberation of the strings, that reverberation which, in a wareroom where a large number of pianos are placed together, makes the instrument appear of greater sonorousness than if it were alone, that reverberation so disagreeable at times in instruments, is not in the least perceived in these. This observation was made by M. Hector Berlioz, that distinguished and profound admirer of all that is good and beautiful, at a special visit, which he pleased to devote to the examination of the Chickering instruments.

The Commission of Examination on hearing for the first time the instruments of Messrs. Chickering were astonished, wondering at the beauty, the elegance, the distinction 'hors ligne' of the sound, the admirable evenness of the key-board—in short the wonderful 'ensemble' of the instrument, even before terminating their work, designated this house as meriting the first reward.

The foreign correspondent of the American papers, took good care not to announce this decision, and printed in some of the American journals, that the pianos with crossed strings had obtained the first grand medal. We would observe to the correspondent, that there are three grand medals, all of equal value. They are distributed among Messrs. Broadwood, Chickering and Steinway, without distinction of priority. (1)

The same correspondent furthermore writes, that the French manufacturers stood stupefied before the piano with crossed strings; that they acknowledged themselves vanquished, and finally that the house of Erard had come to ask permission to copy the system of crossed strings. Imagine the house of Erard, the birth-place of the double movement of the Harp, and of the double escapement of the pianos, which are so many mechanical 'chefs d'oeuvre'—asking permission to copy an old system, which they have tried and abandoned.

True, it is nonsense, an excess of the imagination, that everybody can easily perceive; but it does well in an American editorial; the name strikes, the exaggeration of the proceeding astonishes, and this all that is wanted. These means which may be admissible in transatlantic manners, are not so in France, because it is not fair. Honor with us interdicts sometimes what the law does not prohibit. This correspondent has accustomed us to his

(1.) I have reason to believe that in order to avoid discussions and claims in regard to the rank of the medals, the Imperial Commission will distribute them, as is done in the promotion of the Legion of Honor, in alphabetical order of the exhibitors.

pranks and his inaccuracies; for has he not published in the New York papers that, in a concert given at the Athénée, in which Theodore Ritter made himself heard on a Chickering piano: the artist exerted himself in vain to make the instrument tell; there was a shrugging of shoulders, even the pianist himself spoke of it with indifference? There are in these lines several inaccuracies, to use a moderate word. First, nobody shrugs his shoulders on hearing an instrument which has merited the unanimous admiration of the honorable and able members of the Commission of Examination; nor does anybody shrug his shoulders on listening to so distinguished an artist as M. Theodore Ritter is. As regard the indifference, with which, they assert, the pianist had spoken of the instrument—of this the artist is incapable; he denied it on the day after the concert, in bestowing the greatest encomiums on the instrument.

We take the liberty of suggesting to the New York correspondent, a little less presumption, a little more respect for European manufacture, and above all more accuracy and truth in the appreciation of the productions of the house of Chickering, whose reputation can never be tarnished by the impure breath of calumny.

MARQUIS DE PONTECOULANT.

THE PHILADELPHIA SAENGERFEST.

Next week there will be a great gathering in the City of Brotherly Love, of the German singing societies from all parts of the country. This annual singing contest will be this year very exciting, although one of the best and most spirited of our singing societies, the "Arion," now under the direction of Carl Bergmann, will not engage in the emulative trial, as they have decided not to visit Philadelphia on the occasion.

The annual congregation of so large a body of singers, all amateurs, cannot fail to have a beneficial effect upon the musical art, for the reason that the meetings being competitive, and the same clubs being subject year after year to comparison with each other, a clear judgment can be formed as to the increased excellence, or the falling off, individually and collectively, since the preceding Musical Tournament. These meetings arouse a spirit of emulation, and excite an honorable ambition, which must tell upon the performance of every body of men, tending to a keen appreciation of the delicacies and refinements of execution, by which alone a positive superiority can be established.

It would be well, perhaps, if the object of these vast gatherings could be divided into two distinctions, business and pleasure. The first days should be strictly devoted to the business of rehearsing and singing, so that the voices might be fresh and clear and the

intellects and purpose free and vigorous for the contest; so, in fact, that each club should be in its normal state and in the best condition to display its best powers in competition. The exact excellence of each could then be ascertained, and no extenuating circumstances could be advanced for comparative failure to reach the standard of excellence.

The other days could be devoted to picnic and other amusements, closing with a grand combination of all the clubs in choral union, where individual defects would be effectually covered up.

We make this suggestion, because we are well aware from experience in the past, that it is impossible to combine unreserved social festivities with business, more especially that delicate business of singing, and for the further reason that by such an arrangement all the clubs would be fully represented, for pleasure would have no lagging votaries.

If our business permits we shall visit Philadelphia, but it will, perhaps, be hardly worth our while, as from what we have heard the gathering this year will be infinitely more social than emulative in its character.

TERRACE GARDEN CONCERTS.

The concerts at Terrace Garden, under the direction of Mr. Theodore Thomas, are most truly enjoyable. On every evening they are excellent, but on Tuesday, Friday and Sunday evenings they present attractions which those who love fine music find hard to resist. The programmes on these evenings are interspersed with beautiful classical selections from the most celebrated authors, performed with infinite care, delicacy and precision, and afford an enjoyment which is well worth a long journey to obtain. The selections comprise works by Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Weber, Rossini, Bach and other great names, with lighter subjects to satisfy those who are not classically inclined.

So far this season, the attendance has greatly exceeded that of last season, proving conclusively that these concerts have increased in public favor, and that, weather permitting, this season will prove a brilliant success. The fifth Sunday evening concert takes place to-morrow night.

Mr. J. W. Currier, who is so well known to all who ever have occasion to visit the ware-rooms of Messrs. Mason & Hamlin, at 596 Broadway, was very agreeably surprised a few days since, by a gift of a handsome silver tea-service from the employees of that establishment. The immediate occasion of the friendly demonstration was the approach of Mr. Currier's wedding-day. We take this opportunity of adding our best wishes to the fortunate recipient, in behalf of his many friends.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"JEEMS PIPES DRIFTING."

LONDON, June 2, 1867.

My Dear Journal:

While you in New York are busy moving or going into new habitations, we are going on in the same old hum-drum style, without even the relief of a chimney sweeper's stick and wooden shovel, assisted by a "Jack in the Green" to break the monotony of the occasion! Your correspondent has been doing a little "rambling" about this big city, since his last communication, and will now proceed to give a little account of a visit to

THE "TIMES" PRINTING ESTABLISHMENT.

Fortified with a letter to J. T. Delane, Esq., the editor, I obtained from him a "card" to admit Mr. P. and friends to the "show," my friend on the occasion being a gentleman formerly connected with your establishment, J. A. W., who, by the way, is now sitting by my side, and sends his greeting to you all. A very polite and gentlemanly person, Samuel Simonds, proceeded to show us the interesting parts of the establishment, and from him I gained the following "items": Every day five wagon loads of paper are used for publication, or 70 tons (seventy tons), a week. Four tons of printing ink are used every week. "Smith," the news-vender, carries off 27 cart loads every day. There are 400 men employed. The circulation is about 75,000 a day—(this is double sheet.) The price of a sheet of this paper, superior quality, is one penny and three-tenths of a farthing—there are 14 stacks of paper used in a day, and one stack contains 10,000 sheets. Mr. Simonds has been here 45 years, and is likely to remain 45 years longer. "Hoe's" presses (N. Y.) are here in full force, and everything goes on with the precision of clock-work. There is a large "cooking" place here, where the employees can refresh themselves *ad lib.*, with the good things of this life; and in this and several other respects, it knocks into "pi" every other establishment I have ever seen in my ramblings. Come with me now for a brief visit to

"NEWGATE."

Knocking at the door of Governor "Jonas" in the old Bailey, it was opened by a liveried porter, who, upon presenting my card to the head functionary, desired me to walk in. There is not so very much difference between this and other institutions of the kind elsewhere. The "cells" are perhaps larger and better appointed than at the "Tombs," and the prisoners are kept harder at work here. They have also four or six "dark cells," in which very refractory ones are placed. A day or so here manages to curb the passions of the most vicious, and they have also a whipping post, where *garroters* get their backs lashed, even by the irrepressible *Calcraft*, and I was told by my conductor, that the celebrated hangman remarked to him upon the occasion of the last "whipping," that he would *much rather* "hang" a man than "flog" him! I saw the irons that were placed on Mr. Jack Sheppard, walked through "Murderers' Row," sat in the condemned chair (no pew now), in the chapel, looked in at the kitchen, wanted to try some of the soup and bread, which looked very tempting, but didn't, and stood on the gloomy gateway where for the last 100 years, so many poor fellows have "stept off" into eternity, and glad enough was I to get out into the open

air, and so calling a "cab," I, by the advice of Mr. E. J., of New York, went to the

"BETHLEHEM HOSPITAL,"

where, by the kindness of Dr. W. Rhys Williams and Dr. Wetherby, I was shown through this wonderful institution, formed by King Henry VIII. In the book for the registry of names, the last person who had written there, strange to say, was "John C. Breckenridge," March 4, 1867. They can accommodate 800 patients, and the appointments are indeed perfect. The inmates were at dinner on this occasion, and first rate food it was, capitally cooked, and each had a glass of ale. There were the usual number of "Kings," "Queens" and "Generals" among the patients. President Lincoln came up to me; so did "Queen Victoria," and "Napoleon"; another man insisted he was the Duke of Wellington, and asked me if I had seen Blucher that morning, and wished me to dine with him that night at Apsley House. There are some superb grounds attached to this mammoth place, and in summer time the eye is feasted by lovely flowers and beautifully laid out garden walks.

Ere you get this, you will have heard of the great success at "Newcastle-upon-Tyne" of Charles Reade's

"GRIFFITH GAUNT,"

Miss Avonia Jones enacting the heroine. The Newcastle papers are full of complimentary notices, and the piece will, they say, have a long run. You will remember how successful it was at "Smith & Baker's" Theatre, when that clever actor, Mortimer, and the charming Rose Etyng made, in it, such a sensation. I suppose now Mr. Reade will produce this popular play in London, where it must surely make a profound sensation. And this reminds me, that at the "Garrick" last week, I met the popular tragedian, James Anderson, who, on the 13th of July, sails per "Great Britain" for Melbourne, Coptic, the manager, having offered him £6,000, or \$30,000 for a year's performances. Mr. Anderson is immensely popular here, and his legion friends are getting up for him a "Farewell Dinner." He says, had he known that his friend Barney Williams had taken Wood's Theatre for a two years' lease, he would have popped on you in New York to say good-bye. He is very fond of America, and Americans. Here is a curiosity, for which I am indebted to Mr. John C. Chappell, the eminent surgeon of George St., Hanover Square. It is a copy of the original bill of fare on Lord Mayor's Day, 1478—or 400 years ago!—the *whole dinner* only costing *seven shillings*!

A Bill of Fare for the Wax Chandlers Company, Oct. 29, 1478, being Lord Mayor's Day in the Reign of King Edward IV.:

	s.	d.	f.
A loin of Beef.....	4	—	—
A leg of Mutton.....	2	2	—
Two loins of Veal and two loins of Mutton.....	1	4	—
A Goo e.....	0	—	—
A Capon.....	6	—	—
A Pig and a Rabbit.....	6	—	—
A dozen Pigeons.....	7	—	—
A hundred of Eggs.....	8	2	—
A gallon of Wine.....	8	—	—
A kilderkin of Ale.....	1	8	—
	7	—	—

Your once upon a time favorite singer, Mad. Morensi, (*nee* Duckworth,) is thus spoken of by the *Times* of yesterday:

Mlle. Morensi, the American *mezzo-soprano*, has risen a step in the estimation of connoisseurs by her impersonation of *Ulrica*. The music of this part is well suited to her voice; and she gives it impressively wherever—and the occasions are by no means infrequent—it is naturally impressive. Especially good was her delivery in the mysterious episode where *Ulrica* instructs *Amelia* how to find the plant which is to effect the cure of her unhappy passion for the Duke ("Della città all'ocaso," &c.)